/64 cont./
[illegible] likewise understandable, considering their significance, though the least possible loss of blood may also have been a consideration" (324).

324. Strebel, 1885, p. 13.

On the other hand, with regard to the Surára and Pakidái it should be noted that there is no circumcision of boys among them and the defloration of small girls unequivocally serves for later sexual intercourse; there are no religious motives or hygienic reasons connected with it. Whether this was different in former times neither the chiefs nor older men and women were able to say (325a).

325a. It is an interesting fact that among the Itälmen on Kamchatka little girls are deflowered at a very tender age by their mothers in the same manner as among the Surára and Pakidái and for the same reason (Stellers, 1774, p. 346).

This type of body deformation has been documented for China and Indonesia too. It is done there, however, for hygienic purposes, in order to remove the mucus which gathers in the genitalia (Ploss, 1912, pp. 218/19).

It should be mentioned further that all Surára and Pakidái fathers often touch the vulva of their small daughters with the mouth and gently suck on it.

If a man has two or more wives, they help each other in caring for a baby. The grandmother, a sister, or the eldest daughter are also loving helpers. Infant care, of course, does not require much trouble, for regular baths are unknown. It is only when the crust of dirt is a little too thick that the mother washes it off a bit when she goes to fetch water from the river. The infrequent washing has the advantage that the skin is more nearly invulnerable to mosquito bites. If the child's nose is not

/89 cont./

12. Hygiene

515 Regular bathing, washing of the face and hands, and cleaning the finger and toe nails are unknown; this is also true for babies, who are often covered with a veritable crust of dirt. Nor do they /90/ brush their teeth or ever rinse their mouths. Yet I [147] [145] was never aware of an unpleasant body odor or bad breath on the Indians, and until an advanced age their teeth are dazzlingly white and sound. While hunting or gathering, however, if men and women are obliged to cross a brook or small river, they gladly utilize the opportunity to take a refreshing bath, and the same is true when female members of the tribe fetch water. A bath is greatly appreciated by children and young people, but [481] not at all by older persons. Most men can swim quite well and teach their sons also; women and girls who swim are exceptions. 177 515 As a result of occasional contacts with the palm-fiber gatherers on the Rio Aracá or with the personnel of the Indian protection post on the Demini, the Surára and Pakidái have for some time been acquainted with soap, and various Indians, predominantly children and young men and women, like to lather themselves when they take a bath. Several women had even taken to washing their hammocks now and then with soap. Thus, the cakes of soap [123] that I carried with me were very much in demand, as were perfume and hair tonic.

264 Eating is done only with the hands (see p. 184). If the meat was very greasy and the hands are smeared all over with dirt and grease, they are rubbed off somewhat against a post and then run through the hair a few times. The eating bowls and pots, with the remains of the meal, are then put down for the dogs, who at the same time take over the work of cleaning; eating utensils are seldom washed. When they are needed for the next meal, the woman passes them over her hair a few times. If there are still a few crusts of dirt present, she spits on them and rubs them with her hand.

/225 cont./ The Sanemá say that the
793 hɐwīawán kills vultures and sparrow hawks on his travels (Becher,
825 1960, p. 96). As we have already explained in another section of this chapter, the Sanemá believe that the eagle and other birds of prey are "men" who can be killed only if they belong to an enemy tribe.

793 The hikulaɛ offers the priest the possibility of flying to the
798 house of Omao. In order that I might understand him better and
[796] not doubt his veracity, the native making the drawing fixed a
[126] propeller to the mysterious sphere. One might say that the
[795] hɐwīawán is carrying the soul of a dead person to the house of Omao.

756 The second religious practitioner of the Sanemá is a shaman, who is called sablf. The supernatural world over which he has power is different from the world of the priest, and therefore his function is different from that of the former.

[533] In order to become a shaman, the candidate must submit to a very rigorous training under the guidance of an old sablf who knows how to sing the "Great Kɛɛ."

756 /226/ During the period of apprenticeship, which lasts
276 several weeks, the candidate takes yopo continually through a
262 tube or simply with the hand, eats very little and only the food
● 515 prescribed; he does not bathe and almost does not speak. Among
123 the Waica of the Upper Orinoco I saw a group of these candidates who gave me a depressing impression since they showed prolonged suffering as a result of the consumption of the drug. We were not able to speak with them, and we were not allowed to take blood samples from them as we did with the other members of the rancheria.

756 It seems that all the men are potentially sablfes, but
533 among them there are some who are very strong and others who
774 are weak, and only the strongest ones are able to sing the "kɛɛ" well. This song is rendered by the sablf at the end of his period of instruction, when the candidates are prepared and ready to receive the hfkulas, or "specific vital principles" of the species of flora and fauna, with the exception of fish. As soon as they hear the call of their master, they obey and go toward his locality, where they find the sablf candidate waiting for them to enter his

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Our chief occupations were the louse and the

flea—the penetrating variety, *Afroamericana nigua*, which keeps everybody's feet busy in the equatorial zones of our globe every bit as effectively as the dances that originate there. Americana is not such a bad animal as his African brother, the jigger, though he is more plentiful. Indian feet are full of him, and the open craters in the horny, almost bony patches forming the ball of the foot are evidence of the constant care they take to keep open the little insects' snug lairs and prevent him from taking up permanent residence.

The eradication of lice is carried out at a family or social gathering in a spirit of mutual aid. Men and women will all sit round together in a circle making a thorough inspection of one another's thick hair till they come upon the black louse crouching there silently, like a peccary surprised in the forest, among the roots of the hairs. He is taken between two fingers and disposed of in the simplest fashion: he is eaten. The same privilege is accorded to the eggs, which like all eggs must taste delicious. The nigua can be dealt with by oneself but female collaboration is nevertheless appreciated. A soft, gentle hand—Samatari ladies have exceedingly small hands and feet—introduces a pin (presented by us) or a splinter of Corozo palm (presented by the forest) into the little nest. The white grub of this accursed insect then emerges into the light of day, but the fate reserved for it is not a human end. It is thrown to the fish, which come along in shoals for the fat tit-bit.

We had no soap, and during these halts the best we could do was to splash water over ourselves. The Samatari were not interested in following our example: rain gave them the only baths they ever took. We couldn't even swim to get clean, as we had done in the 'black water' rivers higher up, because there was danger lurking here beneath the harmless-looking surface.

The perils of tropical rivers are five in number—five major perils, that is, because the minor ones, like the amoeba and other parasites, may loom large among the fads and fancies of medical men but do not form part of the psychological baggage of the explorer.

The cayman is king of these perils. His reign is uncontested. His body may be anything up to thirteen feet long, solid and impregnable as a crest of rock. Almost equal in rank is peril number two—the anaconda or water-serpent: if the cayman is king, the anaconda is certainly queen. She is a wonderful monster, up to ten yards in length, with all the force of a hurricane. And being a reptile, the anaconda has all the virtues of the reptiles, enhanced by her aquatic habits, which make her cleaner and nobler than them all.

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50. While the men leave the fells, their women-folk pause for hygiene.

[p. 192 - H]

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So we passed one of those anxious forest nights, our thoughts torn between the fate of our equipment and fear of an attack. But there were two aspects of the matter which reassured us, and bearing them in mind we managed to get some sleep towards morning. One was the comparative serenity of our Indians, who had made no alteration in their habitual way of spending the night—long spells of sleep, interrupted occasionally for a brief moment to attend to the fire. The other was the mental inventory we made of the items of equipment we still had with us, enough, certainly, for us to live on until we could get out of this region on to some Brazilian or Venezuelan river. One doubt still lingered: suppose the Indians refused to go on with us? They had been badly scared by whatever it was that had happened up on the hills, and rather than face it again they might want to change the route.

We set off next morning without any breakfast. But the fact that the Indians came along too, without making any bones about it, was very comforting. We went over two hills, and then the track crossed a stream of milky water running in a south-easterly direction. Its rocky bed was strewn with great jagged blocks of quartz. A little while later, on steadily rising ground, we turned aside into territory where there was no track at all, and reached a forest clearing which had been formed by the fall of a group of trees of the *caulpinae* family. They were lying on the mouldering forest floor. And there, under a regular stockade of tree-trunks, was our baggage that the men had left on yesterday's trip. Our porters took some of the most-needed medical supplies and the best of the tinned stuff from this dump, to add to the burdens they were already carrying, and we went on towards the heart of the mystery.

The slope became gradually steeper and we finished up against a rocky sandstone cliff—a blank wall that we should have to climb. We followed along the foot of it to the right for perhaps two hundred yards till we came to a landslip, overgrown with bamboos and bromeliads, which offered an open view over the valley. We climbed up and found ourselves on a high plateau, among vegetation of a different order—poorer, thinner stuff. This plateau soon began to tilt downwards towards the farther side, at a steadily increasing angle, till we came to a stream of black water which ran in the same direction as the last we had seen.

As if performing some rite, the medicine-man took a bath here. There really was something extraordinary about this character. A purely voluntary

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both like this—we had never seen him take one before—seemed to prove the point.

Between the sandstone of the high plateau and the usual granite of this region there was here an unexpected intermediary layer white with kaolin. After another hour of hard going we once more found ourselves in the lush vegetation of the lowlands. To the left of the track at one point, in a cavity formed by the collapse of a big tree whose roots had been torn out of the earth, we found the light baggage carried here and stowed the day before. It was apparently unharmed, even if literally covered with a revolting army of termites. We had the packs taken out of the hole (with the greatest caution for fear of a hidden snake), piled them all up together and covered them with palm leaves—because now the Indians didn't seem to be in any hurry to cover more mileage that day, nor did they lift a finger to start putting up the usual shelter for the night.

The baggage was untouched: the possibility of seeing our expedition through to the end was therefore open to us once more. Such a satisfactory state of affairs filled us with enthusiasm, and we decided to sacrifice no less than four tins of corned beef. We shared it out among the porters. This extra meal put some heart into the Indians, and picking up their machetes again they beckoned us to follow them along the track once more, where it veered to the south, through the forest. We could make out from their gestures that we were close to the heart of the great mystery now, and so took plenty of ammunition with us in case we should need it. The gradient stiffened. The track turned to the right, into a thick maze of wild banana and thorny briarwood, and then through a little swamp where there were numerous prints of bare feet, to end up in front of a stockade of thorny palm, freshly piled up for some defensive purpose.

A sweet, heavy smell hung in the air—the typical smell of an Indian camp after it has been abandoned for a few days, which comes from rotting remains of meat and game, and decaying vegetable matter. The barrier of thorny palm was an insuperable obstacle for bare Indian feet. We followed it along to the right till we found a break, half hidden by a few tree-trunks, which led us inside the camp. At first sight it seemed no different from the usual Samatari pattern. Here and there—all over the place, in fact—were piles of ashes and vegetable refuse of all kinds. But this encampment had one particular feature which, although the conscious part of our minds missed it at first, made us feel

/483 cont./

758 They bathe sick persons. If the patient cannot go to the
• 515 stream, they bathe him part by part at home and even in his own hammock.

/484/ Death

763 They are generally afraid of death and make every effort to keep a dying person alive for a while longer. When someone is in danger of dying, the relatives and friends hold meetings for lamentations at least once a day.

764 When a dying person expires, a time of mourning begins.
[302] Then, at about 3:00 in the afternoon, the funeral begins. The relatives and friends begin to paint themselves. There is much
[535] crying and lamentation. The women dance forward and backward, groaning and carrying several poisoned darts in one hand. If there are young children, they are frequently carried also. If the deceased is a little one, its little body may be carried during the final part of this mourning dance. A few closely related men and the intimate friends also participate in the dance.

After the lamentations have continued for a quarter of an hour more or less, the men go out in search of firewood and light a fire of two meters in front of the dwelling where the corpse is lying. When the fire reaches an adequate size, the body is carried there in a hammock made of cords of vine and placed on the fire. Then they put more wood on top of the
[766] corpse. If the deceased is an infant, they place it in the fire in a flat basket rather than a hammock. They keep the fire burn-
[765] ing until around ten at night. Then they gather up the bones, wrap them in leaves, and hang them in the house.

If someone should die far from the settlement, his body is wrapped in leaves tied with vines and carried to the settlement to be cremated.

765 About three days after the cremation, the bones are pulverized in a small trough and then kept hermetically in a gourd capped with beeswax. The trough is made by using a machete to carve out the hole, burning its interior. They use it only once. After it is used, both the trough and the pestle are burned. Much weeping accompanies the process of pulverization and sealing the remains in the gourd.

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anthropological training at the University of Michigan that kinship was equivalent to society in primitive tribes and that it was a moral way of life, "moral" being something "good" and "desirable." I was determined to work my way into their moral system of kinship and become a member of their society.

My heart began to pound as we approached the village and heard the buzz of activity within the circular compound. Mr. Barker commented that he was anxious to see if any changes had taken place while he was away and wondered how many of them had died during his absence. I felt into my back pocket to make sure that my notebook was still there and felt personally more secure when I touched it. Otherwise, I would not have known what to do with my hands.

The entrance to the village was covered over with brush and dry palm leaves. We pushed them aside to expose the low opening to the village. The excitement of meeting my first Indians was almost unbearable as I duck-waddled through the low passage into the village clearing.

I looked up and gasped when I saw a dozen burly, naked, filthy, hideous men staring at us down the shafts of their drawn arrows! Immense wads of green tobacco were stuck between their lower teeth and lips making them look even more hideous, and strands of dark-green slime dripped or hung from their noses. We arrived at the village while the men were blowing a hallucinogenic drug up their noses. One of the side effects of the drug is a runny nose. The mucus is always saturated with the green powder and the Indians usually let it run freely from their nostrils. My next discovery was that there were a dozen or so vicious, underfed dogs snapping at my legs, circling me as if I were going to be their next meal. I just stood there holding my notebook, helpless and pathetic. Then the stench of the decaying vegetation and filth struck me and I almost got sick. I was horrified. What sort of a welcome was this for the person who came here to live with you and learn your way of life, to become friends with you? They put their weapons down when they recognized Barker and returned to their chanting, keeping a nervous eye on the village entrances.

We had arrived just after a serious fight. Seven women had been abducted the day before by a neighboring group, and the local men and their guests had just that morning recovered five of them in a brutal club fight that nearly ended in a shooting war. The abductors, angry because they lost five of the seven captives, vowed to raid the Bisaasi-teri. When we arrived and entered the village unexpectedly, the Indians feared that we were the raiders. On several occasions during the next two hours the men in the village jumped to their feet, armed themselves, and waited nervously for the noise outside the village to be identified. My enthusiasm for collecting ethnographic curiosities diminished in proportion to the number of times such an alarm was raised. In fact, I was relieved when Mr. Barker suggested that we sleep across the river for the evening. It would be safer over there.

As we walked down the path to the boat, I pondered the wisdom of having decided to spend a year and a half with this tribe before I had even seen what they were like. I am not ashamed to admit, either, that had there been a diplomatic way out, I would have ended my fieldwork then and there. I did not look forward to the next day when I would be left alone with the Indians; I did not speak a word of their language, and they were decidedly different from what I had imagined them to be. The whole situation was depressing, and I wondered why I ever decided to switch from civil en-

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114 123 gineering to anthropology in the first place. I had not eaten all day, I was soaking wet from perspiration, the gnats were biting me, and I was covered with red pigment, the result of a dozen or so complete examinations I had been given by as many burly Indians. [515] These examinations capped an otherwise grim day. The Indians would blow their noses into their hands, flick as much of the mucus off that would separate in a snap of the wrist, wipe the residue into their hair, and then carefully examine my face, arms, legs, hair, and the contents of my pockets. I asked Mr. Barker how to say "Your hands are dirty"; my comments were met by the Indians in the following way: They would "clean" their hands by spitting a quantity of slimy tobacco juice into them, rub them together, and then proceed with the examination.

Mr. Barker and I crossed the river and slung our hammocks. When he pulled his hammock out of a rubber bag, a heavy, disagreeable odor of mildewed cotton came with it. "Even the missionaries are filthy," I thought to myself. Within two weeks, everything I owned smelled the same way, and I lived with that odor for the remainder of the fieldwork. My own habits of personal cleanliness reached such levels that I didn't even mind being examined by the Indians, as I was not much cleaner than they were after I had adjusted to the circumstances.

So much for my discovery that primitive man is not the picture of nobility and sanitation I had conceived him to be. I soon discovered that it was an enormously time-consuming task to maintain my own body in the manner to which it had grown accustomed in the relatively antiseptic environment of the northern United States. Either I could be relatively well fed and relatively comfortable in a fresh change of clothes and do very little fieldwork, or, I could do considerably more fieldwork and be less well fed and less comfortable.

114 122 It is appalling how complicated it can be to make oatmeal in the jungle. First, I had to make two trips to the river to haul the water. Next, I had to prime my kerosene stove with alcohol and get it burning, a tricky procedure when you are trying to mix powdered milk and fill a coffee pot at the same time: the alcohol prime always burned out before I could turn the kerosene on, and I would have to start all over. Or, I would turn the kerosene on, hoping that the element was still hot enough to vaporize the fuel, and start a small fire in my palm-thatched hut as the liquid kerosene squirted all over the table and walls and ignited. It was safer to start over with the alcohol. Then I had to boil the oatmeal and pick the bugs out of it. All my supplies, of course, were carefully stored in Indian-proof, rat-proof, moisture-proof, and insect-proof containers, not one of which ever served its purpose adequately. Just taking things out of the multiplicity of containers and repacking them afterward was a minor project in itself. By the time I had hauled the water to cook with, unpacked my food, prepared the oatmeal, milk, and coffee, heated water for dishes, washed and dried the dishes, repacked the food in the containers, stored the containers in locked trunks and cleaned up my mess, the ceremony of preparing breakfast had brought me almost up to lunch time!

Eating three meals a day was out of the question. I solved the problem by eating a single meal that could be prepared in a single container, or, at most, in two containers, washed my dishes only when there were no clean ones left, using cold river water, and wore each change of clothing at least a week to cut down on my laundry problem, a courageous undertaking in the tropics. I was also less concerned about sharing my provisions with the rats, insects, Indians, and the elements, thereby eliminating the need

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supplies soak the new leaves in water and add ashes from the hearth to the wad. Men, women, and children chew tobacco and all are addicted to it. Once there was a shortage of tobacco in Kaobawä's village and I was plagued for a week by early morning visitors who requested permission to collect my cigarette butts in order to make a wad of chewing tobacco. Normally, if anyone is short of tobacco, he can request a share of someone else's already chewed wad, or simply borrow the entire wad when its owner puts it down somewhere. Tobacco is so important to them that their word for "poverty" translates as "being without tobacco." I frequently justified my reluctance to give away possessions on the basis of my poverty. Many of them responded by spitting their tobacco into their hand and handing it to me.

Work begins as soon as breakfast is completed; the Yanomamö like to take advantage of the morning coolness. Within an hour after it is light the men are in their gardens clearing brush, felling large trees, transplanting plantain cuttings, burning off dead timber, or planting new crops of cotton, maize, sweet potatoes, yuca, taro, or the like, depending on the season. They work until 10:30 A.M., retiring because it is too humid and hot by that time to continue with their strenuous work. Most of them bathe in the stream before returning to their hammocks for a rest and a meal.

The women usually accompany their husbands to the garden and occupy themselves by collecting firewood or helping with planting and weeding. In this way the men are sure that their families are safe and that the women are not having affairs with other men.

The children spend a great deal of time exploring the wonders of the plant and animal life around them and are accomplished biologists at an early age. Most twelve-year-old boys can, for example, name twenty species of bees and give the anatomical or behavioral reasons for their distinctions—and they know which ones produce the best honey. An eight-year-old girl brought me a tiny egg-like structure on one occasion and asked me to watch it with her. Presently it cracked open and numerous baby cockroaches poured out, while she described the intimate details of the reproductive process to me.

The younger children stay close to their mothers, but the older ones have considerable freedom to wander about the garden at play. Young boys hunt for lizards with miniature bows and featherless arrows. If they can capture one alive, they bring it back to the village and tie a string around it. The string is anchored to a stick in the village clearing and the little boys chase it gleefully, shooting scores of tiny arrows at it (see Fig. 3–8). Since lizards are very quick, and little boys are poor shots, the target practice can last for hours. Usually, however, the fun terminates when an older boy decides to make an end to the unhappy lizard and kills it with his adult-size arrows, showing off his archery skills to the disgruntled small fry.

Little girls learn very quickly that it is a man's world, for they soon must assume much of the responsibility for tending their younger siblings, hauling water and firewood, and in general helping their busy mothers.

Most of the people rest in their hammocks during the heat of midday, although they will collect fruits and other wild foods from the surrounding area, if any are in season. They avoid being in the direct rays of the midday sun.

If the men return to their gardening, they do so about 4:00 P.M., working until sundown. Otherwise, they gather in small groups around the village and take hallucinogenic drugs in the late afternoon shadows, chanting to the mountain demons as the

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drugs take effect. This usually lasts for an hour or so, after which the men bathe to wash the vomit or nasal mucus off their bodies. Kaobawä does not participate in the drug-taking, as he finds it unpleasant. Most of the men, however, do take drugs and enjoy doing it, despite the associated unpleasantries of vomiting and the pain that follows the blast of air as the powder is blown deeply into the nasal passages.

Whatever the men do for the afternoon, however, the women invariably search for firewood and haul immense, heavy loads of it to their houses just before dark.

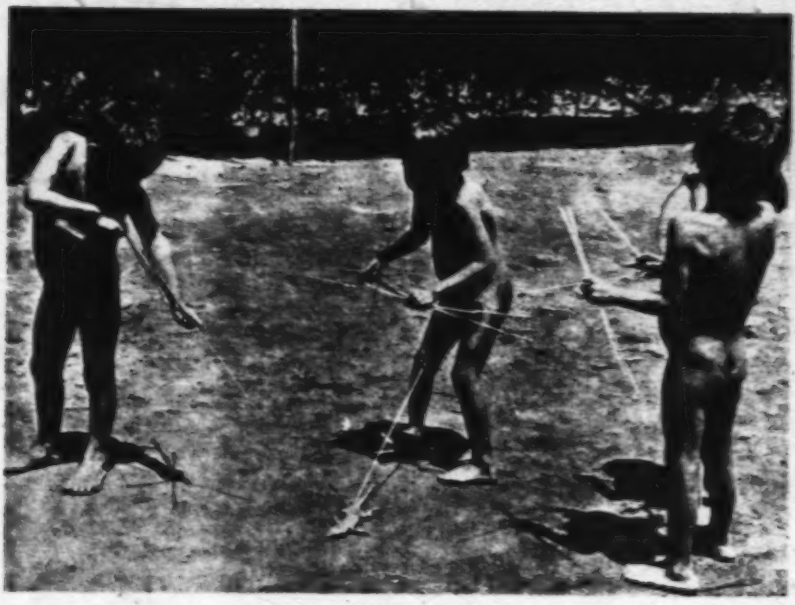

Fig. 3-8. Boys shooting tiny arrows into a lizard they have captured. The lizard is tied to a string and allowed to run around the village while the boys gleefully chase it. Here they have wounded it and are about to fill it full of arrows.

The biggest meal of the day is prepared in the evening. The staple is plantains, but frequently other kinds of food are available after the day's activities. Meat is always the most desirable food and is always considered to be in short supply. It is a happy occasion when one of the hunters bags a tapir, for everyone gets a large share of it.

It is good to share meat with others. This attitude is expressed in the sentiment that a hunter should give away most of the game he kills. One of the obligations men take very seriously is providing adequate quantities of meat for their wives and children. They genuinely abhor hearing their children cry for meat; this calls into question their abilities as hunters and marksmen, both of which are associated with prestige. Rerebawä, for example, collected a large supply of game on one trip we took together. He gave it all to his wife and children and to his wife's parents. At the evening meal he refused to

At the evening meal he refused to take a portion of the meat so that the others could have more. Later in the evening, he appeared at my hut begging for a can of sardines to satisfy his hunger for meat. He preferred to go hungry rather than risk the onus of being accused of poor marksmanship or stinginess.

Both sexes participate in the cooking, although the women do the greater share of it. Food preparation is not elaborate and rarely requires much labor, time, or paraphernalia. Spices are never used, although the salty ashes of a particular kind of tree are sometimes mixed with water to form a condiment of sorts. The food is dunked into the salty liquid and eaten.

Everyone eats in his hammock using his fingers for utensils. Some meals cannot be eaten from a reclining position, so the members of the family squat in a circle around the common dish. For example, large quantities of tiny fish are cooked by wrapping them in leaves and cooking them in the hot coals. When the fish are done, the package is spread open, and everyone shares its contents.

Animals are never skinned before cooking. They are merely put over the fire after their entrails have been removed, and roasted, head, fur, claws, and all. Most of the fur is singed off in the process of cooking. The animal is dismembered by hand. The head, particularly the head of a monkey, is highly prized because the brain is considered a delicacy. The most common meat is monkey, of which there are several varieties, so that this delicacy is enjoyed rather frequently by the Yąnomamö.

By the time supper is over it is nearly dark. The fires are prepared for the evening; if someone has allowed his own fire to go out during the day, he simply borrows two glowing sticks from a neighbor and rekindles his own hearth. The entrances to the village are sealed off with dry brush so that prowlers can not enter without raising an alarm. Before retiring to their hammocks, the Yąnomamö first sit on them and wipe the bottoms of their bare feet together. This rubs off most of the debris that has accumulated on them during the course of the day. Everyone sleeps naked and as close to the fire as possible. Despite the inevitable last-minute visiting, things are usually quiet in the village by the time it is dark.

Things are not always quiet after dark. If anyone in the village is sick, a shaman will chant to the malevolent spirits most of the night to exorcise them. Or, should anyone be mourning a dead kinsman, he or she will sob and wail long after the others have fallen asleep. Occasionally, a fight will break out between a husband and wife, and soon everybody in the village will be screaming, expressing opinions on the dispute. The shouting may continue sporadically for hours, dying down only to break out anew as someone gets a fresh insight into the problem. Once in a while someone gives a long, loud speech voicing his opinion on the world in general. Those who are interested may add their own comments, but the audience usually grumbles about the noise and falls asleep.

Status Differences and Activities

Daily activities, except those concerning gardening and visiting, do not vary much from season to season. Much of the variation that does occur is a function of one's age or sex, as was shown above.

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and guests that gradually died off as each group busied itself in preparation for the dance.

Shortly after noon a rumor circulated through the village that the visitors had been raiding the gardens at night and stealing plantains. A number of people, particularly older men, were visibly upset by this new information, giving rise to another rumor that there would be a chest-pounding duel to set the matter straight. The guests had already worn their welcome thin by arriving uninvited a week in advance and by eating excessively. Their hosts were becoming angry with them, as it was all too obvious that they were deliberately taxing their hosts' patience; they were intimidating them.

The men of the host group had finished their preparations for the feast; they were all painted in red and black, bearing colorful feathers. They had cleaned the debris from their houses, had finished hauling out the weeds they had picked from the village clearing, and had brought in quantities of food to give their guests. Now, it was time for them to take *ebene*, their hallucinogenic drug. They separated into several groups and began blowing the brownish-green powder up each other's nostrils with 3-foot long hollow tubes. As the drug would be administered, each recipient would reel from the concussion of air, groan, and stagger off to some convenient post to vomit. Within ten minutes of taking the drug, the men would be bleary-eyed and wild, prancing around in front of their houses, stopping occasionally to vomit or to catch their breath. In each group there would be one man particularly adept at chanting to the *bekura*, the mountain demons, and he would soon take over the show, while the others retired to the sidelines in a stupor, green slime dripping from their nostrils. Should there be sick people in the village, the adept chanters—the *shabori*—would cure them by chanting, massaging, sucking, and vomiting out the evil spirit that caused the sickness. Otherwise, they would chant about other things, perhaps sending their *bekura* to enemy villages to eat the souls of children, or enjoining them to prevent their enemies from doing the same. Occasionally, one of the men takes too much of the drug and become violent. On this particular occasion, Shiimima, one of Kaobawä's brothers, grabbed his bow and arrows and ran to the center of the village. This caused a minor sensation for a moment, but one of the men managed to catch and disarm him, hiding his weapons so he could not find them. Things returned to normal again, and the other participants in the drug-taking began chanting to Shiimima to restore him to his senses. The chanting lasted for an hour or so, and the participants, one by one, returned to their houses to clean up their paint jobs; most of them had smeared their careful work by vomiting all over themselves.

While the men were taking their drugs, the women were busy painting and decorating themselves with feathers and red pigment. The visitors, also, were busy at the same tasks, and the excitement of the feast reached fever proportions by mid-afternoon. A few women were still busy finishing trade baskets, while Kaobawä's younger brothers continued with the monotonous cooking of what seemed to them an endless number of plantains.

Finally, an old man from the visiting group entered the village and marched unceremoniously across the clearing while the members of Kaobawä's group cheered him. He was too old to join the dancing, but too respected to wait behind with the women and children while the younger men put on their display. This was evidence that the visitors were about to send in their delegate to accept the feast invitation at Kaobawä's house.

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Fig. 5-1. Karïma, one of Kaobawä's daughters, picking lice out of her grandfather's battered head—his scars are from club fights. She wears decorative sticks inserted in the corners of her mouth as a beauty aid. These were inserted at about age five, together with one in the lower lip and another in the nasal septum.